

POWER TALK - Power Techniques to Power Your Talks



Part 1: Topic Triggers to Tame the Terror!

Taking the Fear out of Choosing a Topic for Your Talk

Introduction

A Topic Trigger: a mental device to help initiate the _____ of a _____.

Five specific concepts to consider about your audience:

- ★ What do **you** know?
- ★ What do **they** know?
- ★ What do they want to know?
- ★ What do you know that they don't know but you know they should know?
- ★ How do you tell them?

Speaking professionals were asked "How do you pick the topics for your talks? Answers were grouped into 3 sources

- What they _____
- What they _____
- What they _____

In other words, they draw on their intellect, their emotion, and their memory.

The key is to speak about that which with you are _____

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Topic Trigger #1: What do you know?

Don't skip this exercise! Find a quiet spot, get a sheet of paper, eliminate the distractions, and set aside 15 minutes to LIST WHAT YOU KNOW. Darren LaCroix, 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking calls them "assets".

1. What's your job?
2. What's your job title?
3. What are your professional responsibilities?
4. Where did you go to school?
5. What's your degree?
6. Do you have any advanced degrees?
7. What formal training have you had?
8. What informal training have you had?
9. What jobs have had in the past?



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Topic Trigger #1: What do you know? (continued)

10. What community organizations do you belong to?

11. Do you have any pets?

12. What are your hobbies?

13. What special skills do you have?

14. What sports do you play?

15. Do you play any musical Instruments?

16. Do you sing, dance, write or paint?

17. What are your talents?



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Topic Trigger #1: What do you know? (continued)

18. What books do you like to read?
19. Where do you live?
20. Is there anything unique about your neighborhood, town, or state?
21. What's your house like?
22. What do you drive?
23. What do you collect?
24. What do you do in your spare time?
25. What vacations are you planning?



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Topic Trigger #1: What do you know? (continued)

26. What physical issues do you deal with?
27. What's your marital status?
28. What are your family details?
29. Do you have any children?
30. What are they interested in?
31. What are they involved with?
32. What are their concerns?
33. Do you have any certifications, credentials, or citations?

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Topic Trigger #1: What do you know? (continued)

34. What topics do you easily converse about?
35. Are you a fan of politics?
36. Is your faith or religion important to you?
37. Do you care about social justice issues?
38. What interesting or famous people do you know?
39. What's your family background?
40. What big events are in your future?
41. What are your values and priorities?



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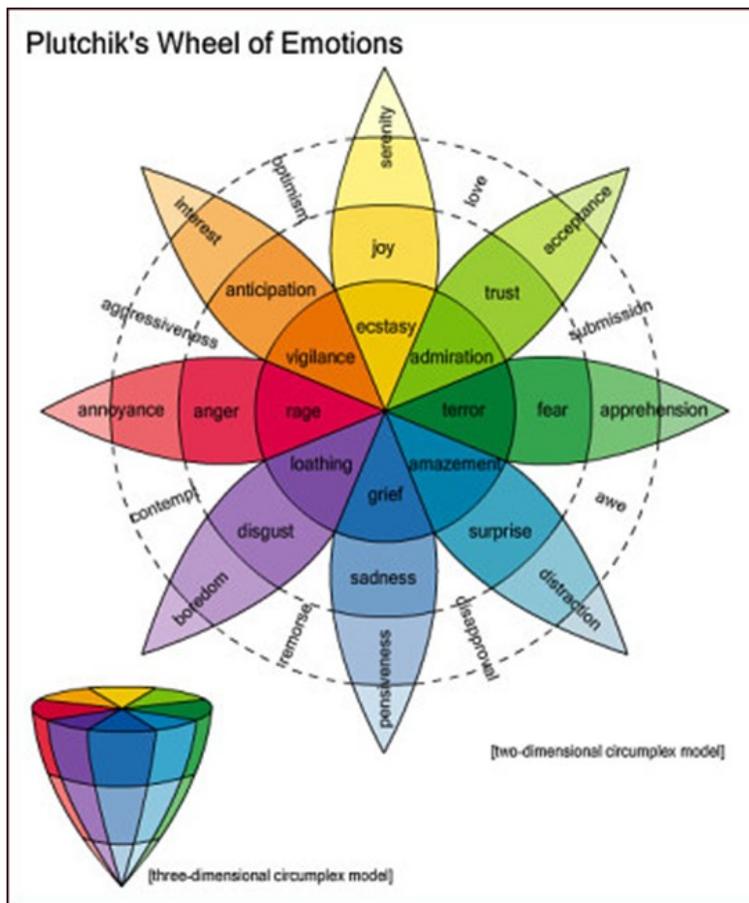
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Topic Trigger #2: What have you FELT?

Lady & the Champs Speaker Conference, hosted by 4 World Champions of Public Speaking, Mark Brown (1995); Craig Valentine (1999); Ed Tate (2000); Darren LaCroix 2001; and Patricia Fripp (First female president of the National Speakers Association)

Darren LaCroix gave a keynote about emotions, using **Plutchik's Wheel of Emotion**



Eight PRIMARY emotions:
Joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, anticipation.

Eight SECONDARY emotions that are combination of primary ones.

For example:

Disappointment is *sadness + surprise*

Optimism is *anticipation + joy*

We all have different

_____.

but the same

_____.

So if you can talk on an emotional level to your audience, you will create an instant and memorable _____



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Topic Trigger #2: What have you FELT? (continued)

List your EMOTIONAL experiences:

1. What are you passionate about?
2. Rocks you out of bed?
3. Consumes your thinking, grabs your heart?
4. What joy have you experienced?
5. What are you proud of?
6. What are you afraid of?
7. What confuses you?
8. What excites you?

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Topic Trigger #2: What have you FELT? (continued)

9. What hurts you?
10. What moves you to tears?
11. What makes you laugh?
12. What loss have you experienced?
13. What impresses you?
14. How has someone encouraged you?
15. What makes you angry?
16. Have you ever been lonely?



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Topic Trigger #2: What have you FELT? (continued)

17. Have you ever been unsatisfied?
18. How about joyful?
19. What do you worry about?
20. What do you envy?
21. What gives you great satisfaction?
22. What makes you sentimental?
23. What gives you relief?
24. Have you ever felt restless?



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Topic Trigger #2: What have you FELT? (continued)

25. Have you ever felt unworthy?
26. Have you ever been in awe of something?
27. Have you ever been shocked by something?
28. Have you ever felt remorse?
29. Have you ever been tempted?
30. Have you ever felt exasperated?
31. What do you long for?

Take them on a roller coaster ride! Craig Valentine in his book **The Nuts and Bolts of Public Speaking** writes: "Most people make decisions on emotion, backed up by logic. Remember, the way to someone's mind is often through his heart."

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Topic Trigger #3: What have you EXPERIENCED?

These are your _____. These are the vehicles to communicate the truths of the message.

Stories provide the links between the facts. Without stories, the brain will see a talk as random scattered facts. Stories help them organize the facts and amplify the application.

Stories are the single most powerful way to not only transfer information but to _____ the information in the minds of your listeners.

With a story, you can:

- ★ Illuminate a point
- ★ develop a vision
- ★ cultivate a connection
- ★ build camaraderie
- ★ create buy-in
- ★ sell a product
- ★ establish credibility
- ★ explain an abstract concept

With a story, you can

- ★ expand
- ★ endear
- ★ envision
- ★ inspire
- ★ inform
- ★ persuade
- ★ empower

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Topic Trigger #3: What have you EXPERIENCED? (continued)

Stories capture their attention and transport them emotionally and _____.

You can't develop your memorable stories unless you list your memorable stories.

- ★ Start by jotting down broad categories: e.g.: Chronological: Kindergarten, grade school, high school, college, grad school, employment
- ★ Systematically go through each time period category and list events (single words, names or short phrases)
- ★ Create another set of categories...
 - ⇒ People: Parents, siblings, neighbors, relatives, bosses.
 - ⇒ Geographic locations
 - ⇒ places you lived
 - ⇒ places you visited
 - ⇒ Activities or hobbies
 - ⇒ people you dated
- ★ Whatever categories you choose, write down EVERYTHING you remember, even trivial events.
- ★ Go through a scrapbook, letters, documents, etc. for more memories.
- ★ **This is the beginning of your STORY FILE!**

***Take the Craig Valentine Challenge:
Every day, once a day, for 30 days, record one
story in your story file!***

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Now What??? **How to turn a Trigger into a Topic**

How do you go from Triggers to Topics? In some cases your trigger IS the topic.

What is your motive? Do you speak to benefit yourself or to benefit your audience? Your audience is always thinking **"What's in it for me?"**

Don't be cotton candy!

Defining the triggers is the first step. Defining the message is the next crucial step.

Remember the 5 things to consider:

- ★ What do **you** know?
- ★ What do **they** know?
- ★ What do they want to know?
- ★ What do you know that they don't know but you know they should know?
- ★ How do you tell them?

"You have to have a mess before you have a message. A Message is just a mess with age." Craig Valentine, 1999 World Champion of Public Speaking

Fourth part of the process: Go through all the triggers, and ask yourself these questions:

- ★ Did I learn something in this situation?
- ★ Did I overcome something in this situation?
- ★ Did I change as a result of this situation?
- ★ How can I use to encourage others who might be in a similar situation?

Any trigger that you answer yes, circle it. It's a TOP TOPIC!

Two categories: Who I am, and what I do (my actions)

Who I am: Character issues. Humility, forgiveness, generosity, kindness, unselfishness, and self discipline.

What I do: activities, results, setting goals, dreaming and doing, be all I can be, how to make more money, etc.